

February 19, 2010

John J. Johnson, Executive Director  
Kentucky Commission on Human Rights  
332 West Broadway, Suite 700  
Louisville, Kentucky 40203

Dear John:

I congratulate the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The historic commission has been a leader in civil rights since its beginning. I know from your long years of helping to lead the NAACP that you will work hard to assist the commission in achieving the highest level of recognition for its half-century of important work.

In addition, I commend the commission for its plans to include in its festivities a meeting and announcement of the Gallery of Great Black Kentuckians poster of Carter G. Woodson at Berea College. As we both know, Berea has played a remarkable historic role in the development of equal opportunity not only in Kentucky but also in the entire United States. There is no better time to recognize this stalwart of institutions than in February, African American History Month.

Perhaps you are aware that my grandmother Julia Britton Hooks, who loved music and was considered a prodigy, enrolled in Berea College in 1869, in an interracial program that allowed her to study music and instruct white students in piano. If it were not for this college's determination during so bleak a time for black students seeking quality education, my grandmother's life could have been very different.

The commission could utilize no better backdrop than this lovely, old place. The anniversary will serve as an excellent chance to publicize the continuing relevance of the commission and the need for the continuing progression of civil rights. At Berea, you will be doing so where so many struggled and fought and achieved to take humankind forward.

Frances sends her love and best wishes. Again, congratulations

My very best personal regards,



Benjamin Lawson Hooks